

What is claimed is:

1                   1.     An interactive computer method for monitoring a project, the  
2 method comprising the steps of:  
3                   defining authorized individuals who have access to an interactive computer  
4 system providing data interchange;  
5                   opening a collaboration center for authorized individuals;  
6                   allowing access to the collaboration center by the authorized individual;  
7                   defining one of a collaboration purpose and deadline; and  
8                   accepting input information from authorized individuals relating to the  
9 collaboration.

1                   2.     The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:  
2                   allowing all authorized individuals to perform one of, review, submit,  
3 author, and change data and to interact with other authorized individuals in the  
4 collaboration center.

1                   3.     The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:  
2                   notifying all authorized individuals of a change in at least one of the  
3 collaboration center purpose, deadline, plan, and input.

1                   4.     The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:  
2                   accepting votes of authorized individuals for an element of the  
3 collaboration.

1                   5.     The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:  
2                   maintaining and displaying the status of each collaboration.

1                   6.     The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:  
2                   providing the collaboration center with the capability of receiving  
3 documents attached to user responses.

1                   7.     The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:

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2 establishing a plan to meet the purpose.

1 8. The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:  
2 establishing a plurality of information modules to control at least one of  
3 project planning, establishing and tracking project tasks, allowing access to documents and  
4 information in any module, providing issue resolution, reviewing project progress,  
5 tracking project finances, scheduling and attending meetings, requesting information,  
6 reporting project data, controlling changes to prospect documents and archiving project  
7 data.

1 9. The method of claim 8 further comprising the step of:  
2 using electronic mail interaction between authorized individuals and the  
3 information modules.

1 10. The method of claim 8 further comprising the step of:  
2 linking each of the information modules for data interchange between each  
3 module.

1 11. The method of claim 8 wherein the step of allowing access to  
2 documents and information in any module comprises the step of:  
3 assigning status states to each of the documents.

1 12. The method of claim 8 wherein the step of requesting information  
2 further comprises the step of:  
3 specifying the name of request recipients for defined organization  
4 categories.

1 13. The method of claim 8 wherein the step of requesting information  
2 further comprises the steps of:  
3 issuing a request for information;  
4 designating a designated recipient for the request for information;  
5 providing the designated recipient with the capability of one of replying  
6 directly to the request for information, delegating the request for information to a

7 designated delegate with the capability for the designated delegate to respond directly to  
8 the request for information; and  
9 providing the designated recipient with the capability of delegating the  
10 request for information to a designated delegate and solely receiving a reply from the  
11 designated delegate.

1 14. The method of claim 8 wherein the step of reviewing project  
2 progress further comprises the steps of:  
3 issuing a request for project data review;  
4 designating a plurality of designated recipients for the review request; and  
5 providing for a reply from the plurality of designated review requests by  
6 one of in parallel from each designated review recipient and in series from all of the  
7 designated recipients.

1 15. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:  
2 allowing each authorized individual to establish a personal preference for  
3 receiving notifications of at least one of input and changes in one of project documents,  
4 project tasks, project issues, change requirements, review requests, finance changes,  
5 request for information, open collaborations, schedule meetings, and project plans.

1 16. The method of claim 15 wherein the step of selecting how to  
2 receive notifications comprises the step of:  
3 electing one of receiving notifications by electronic mail, with or without  
4 attached documents, and the form of the electronic mail.

1 17. The method of claim 15 further comprising the step of:  
2 sending the notifications to each authorized individual by electronic mail.

1 18. An interactive computer method for monitoring a project, the  
2 method comprising the steps of:  
3 establishing a plurality of information modules to control at least one of  
4 project planning, establishing and tracking project tasks, allowing access to documents and  
5 information in any module, providing issue resolution, reviewing project progress,

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6 tracking project finances, scheduling and attending meetings, requesting information,  
7 reporting project data, controlling changes to prospect documents, establishing a  
8 collaboration center for planning and resolving a collaboration purposes, and archiving  
9 project data.

1 19. The method of claim 18 further comprising the step of:  
2 using electronic mail interaction between authorized individuals and the  
3 information modules.

1 20. The method of claim 18 further comprising the step of:  
2 allowing each authorized individual to establish a personal preference for  
3 receiving notifications of at least one of input and changes in one of project documents,  
4 project tasks, project issues, change requirements, review requests, finance changes,  
5 request for information, open collaborations, schedule meetings, and project plans.

1 21. The method of claim 20 wherein the step of selecting how to  
2 receive notifications comprises the step of:  
3 electing one of receiving notifications by electronic mail, with or without  
4 attached documents, and the form of the electronic mail.

1 22. The method of claim 20 further comprising the step of:  
2 sending the notifications to each authorized individual by electronic mail.

1 23. The method of claim 18 further comprising the steps of:  
2 allowing all authorized individuals to perform one of review, submit,  
3 author, and change data and to interact with other authorized individuals in the  
4 collaboration center.

1 24. The method of claim 18 further comprising the step of:  
2 notifying all authorized individuals of a change in at least one of the  
3 collaboration center purpose, deadline, plan, and input.

1 25. The method of claim 18 further comprising the step of:

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2 accepting votes of authorized individuals to one of the purposes and the  
3 plan of the collaboration.

1 26. The method of claim 18 further comprising the step of:  
2 maintaining and displaying the status of each collaboration.

1 27. The method of claim 18 further comprising the steps of:  
2 providing the collaboration center with the capability of receiving  
3 documents attached to user responses.

1 28. The method of claim 18 further comprising the step of:  
2 linking each of the information modules for data interchange between each  
3 module.

1 29. The method of claim 18 further comprising the step of:  
2 allowing access to documents and information in any module; and  
3 assigning status states to each of the documents.

1 30. The method of claim 18 wherein the step of requesting information  
2 further comprises the step of:  
3 specifying the name of request recipients for defined organization  
4 categories.

1 31. The method of claim 18 wherein the step of requesting information  
2 further comprises the steps of:  
3 issuing a request for information;  
4 designating a designated recipient for the request for information;  
5 providing the designated recipient with the capability of one of replying  
6 directly to the request for information, delegating the request for information to a  
7 designated delegate with the capability for the designated delegate to respond directly to  
8 the request for information; and

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9 providing the designated recipient with the capability of delegating the  
10 request for information to a designated delegate and solely receiving a reply from the  
11 designated delegate.

1 32. The claim 18 wherein the step of reviewing project progress further  
2 comprises the steps of:  
3 issuing a request for project data review;  
4 designating a plurality of designated recipients for the review request; and  
5 providing for a reply from the plurality of designated review requests by  
6 one of in parallel from each designated review recipient and in series from all of the  
7 designated recipients.

1 33. The method of claim 18 further comprising the step of:  
2 allowing each authorized individual to establish a personal  
3 preference for receiving notifications of at least one of input and changes in one of project  
4 documents, project tasks, project issues, change requirements, review requests, finance  
5 changes, request for information, open collaborations, schedule meetings, and project  
plans.

1 34. The method of claim 19 further comprising the steps of:  
2 providing an electronic mail response capability for at least certain of the  
3 requests and notifications issued in any of the information modules allowing an authorized  
4 user to respond to the request and notification by direct electronic mail reply; and  
5 the information modules documenting the reply and any documents  
6 attached to the reply in the appropriate information module.

1 35. The method of claim 34 further comprising the step of:  
2 allowing a user to attach documents to a request and notification.

1 36. An interactive computer apparatus for monitoring the progress of  
2 a project, the apparatus comprising:  
3 a computer network with operating software allowing access to project data  
4 by authorized individuals using the computer network;

- 5 means for defining authorized individuals who are authorized to access the  
 6 project on the network;
- 7 means for creating a collaboration center;
- 8 means for allowing access to the collaboration center by authorized  
 9 individuals;
- 10 means for defining one of a collaboration purpose and deadline;
- 11 means for establishing a plan to meet the collaboration purpose; and
- 12 means for accepting inputs from authorized users to one of the  
 13 collaboration purpose, plan and deadline, over the computer network.

1 37. The computer apparatus of claim 36 further comprising:  
 2 the operating software is contained in a central processor accessible by each  
 3 of a plurality of individual nodes.

1 38. The computer apparatus of claim 37 wherein each of the nodes  
 2 communicates with the central processor via a computer network.

1 39. The computer apparatus of claim 37 wherein the computer network  
 2 uses Internet communication protocol for data communication between the nodes and the  
 3 central processor.

1 40. An interactive computer apparatus for monitoring the progress of  
 2 a project, the apparatus comprising:  
 3 a computer network with operating software allowing access to project data  
 4 by authorized individuals using the computer network;

5 means for defining authorized individuals who are authorized to access the  
 6 project on the network;

7 means for planning the project;

8 means for establishing and tracking project tasks;

9 means for allowing access to project documents and information;

10 means for providing issue resolutions;

11 means for reviewing project progress;

12 means for tracking project finances;

- 13 means for scheduling and attending meetings between authorized
- 14 individuals;
- 15 means for requesting information;
- 16 means for reporting project data;
- 17 means for controlling changes to project documents and information; and
- 18 means for archiving project data.

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